

road safety issues

West Coast Region

Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this road safety issues report. It is based on reported crash data for the 2001-2005 period. The intent of the report is to highlight the key road safety issues within the West Coast Region. The three authorities in the region each have their own unique crash patterns. The individual district reports should also be referred to when considering safety measures to implement.

In the last five years, 55 people died in traffic crashes in the region. Also 162 people received serious injuries, and 546 received minor injuries. There were 966 non-injury crashes reported. The total number of injury crashes in the region has shown a small long-term reduction, but in 2005 the number of reported injury crashes on rural roads in the region was the second highest since 1997.

Comparing 2005 reported crashes with the previous year shows:

- there were six fatalities in 2005, down from 10 in 2004
- the number of other injured parties rose from 131 to 153
- the number of reported non-injury crashes reduced by close to 20 percent
- the number of crashes involving alcohol-impaired drivers did not reduce
- the number of reported speed-related factors increased
- the number of overseas drivers involved in injury crashes more than double.

Major road safety issues

West Coast Region

Rural state highways

Local roads

Driver behaviour

Nationally

Speed

Alcohol

Failure

Restraints



2005 road trauma for West Coast Region



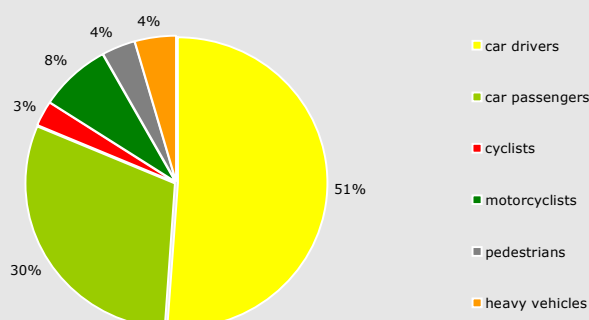
Deaths	6
Serious casualties	38
Minor casualties	115



Fatal crashes	6
Serious injury crashes	29
Minor injury crashes	72
Non-injury crashes	203

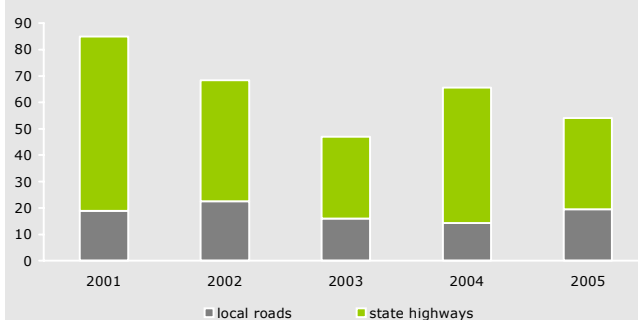
Road casualties 2001-2005

User type 2001-2005



Estimated social cost of crashes*

Social cost (\$ million)



* The estimated social cost includes loss of life or life quality (estimated by the amount New Zealanders are prepared to pay to reduce their risk of fatal or non-fatal injury), loss of output due to injuries, medical and rehabilitation costs, legal and court costs, and property damage. These costs are expressed at June 2005 prices.

Rural state highways

Over half of all crashes reported on roads in the West Coast Region from 2001 to 2005 were on state highways in rural areas. These crashes accounted for 69 percent of deaths and 61 percent of both serious and minor injuries. In addition, 45 percent of reported non-injury crashes were on rural state highways. These accounted for 38 fatalities, 99 serious injuries, 332 minor injuries and 446 non-injury crashes.

The most common type of crash was loss of control or a head-on crash on a bend. The next most common was similar crash types on straight roads. These crashes accounted for over two thirds of fatal crashes, over 80 percent of injury crashes and almost three quarters of non-injury crashes.

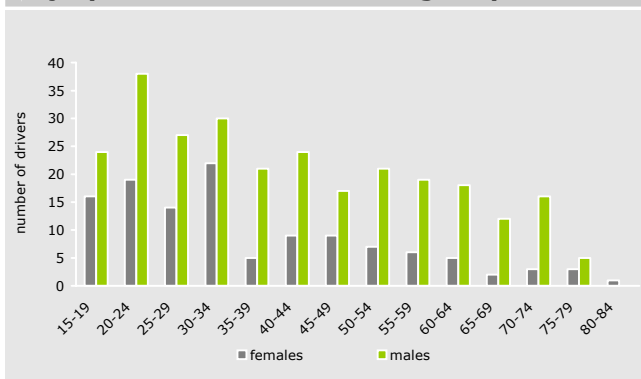
For all crashes, the driver factors most commonly recorded were poor handling, driving too fast for the conditions, poor observation and poor judgement. In fatal crashes, fatigue was also commonly recorded.

Almost half of all reported crashes of this type were on wet or icy roads. Just over one quarter were in darkness. Of the crashes in darkness, over half were at weekends. For crashes in daylight, less than one third were at weekends.

The fixed objects struck most often in crashes on rural state highways were upright banks, fences, ditches, over banks and trees.

Males represented almost 70 percent of drivers involved in injury crashes on rural state highways. Drivers of all ages, both male and female, were involved.

Injury crashes on rural state highways



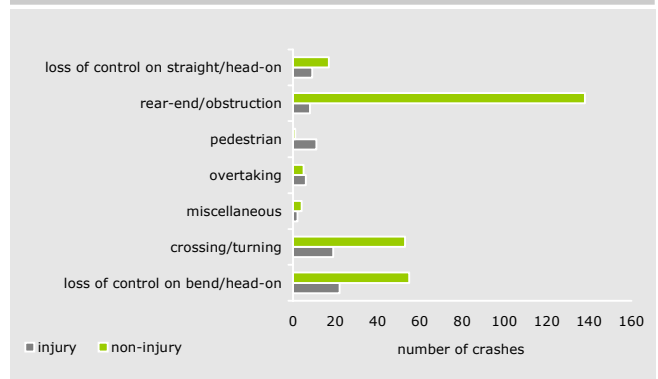
Local roads

In the West Coast Region from 2001 to 2005, crashes on local roads resulted in 14 fatalities, 54 people sustained serious injuries and 151 had minor injuries. There were also 409 non-injury crashes reported. Crashes on local roads in urban areas accounted for just over half of all injury crashes on local roads. Two thirds of non-injury crashes on local roads were in urban areas.

Urban local roads

Loss of control or head-on crashes represented 40 percent of all urban injury crashes in the region. Crossing/turning crashes accounted for another 25 percent. For non-injury crashes, rear-end/collision with obstruction crashes represented half of all urban crashes in the region. Loss of control/head-on and crossing/turning crashes each accounted for close to 20 percent of non-injury crashes.

Crash type on urban local roads



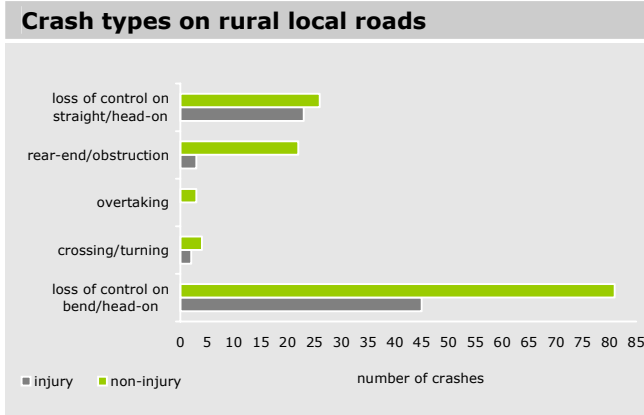
For both injury and non-injury crashes poor observation, excessive speed and failure to give way or stop were the driver factors most often recorded in urban local road crashes.

The fixed objects struck most often in crashes on urban local roads were parked vehicles, fences and poles.

Drivers in the 15–19 year age group were most commonly reported in injury crashes on urban local roads in the region. Female drivers represented over 40 percent of all drivers involved in these crashes.

Rural local roads

The most common type of crash on rural local roads in the West Coast Region was loss of control or a head-on crash on a bend. Loss of control or a head-on crash on a straight road was the next most common crash type. These crashes accounted for all fatal crashes, over 90 percent of injury crashes and over three quarters of non-injury crashes on rural local roads in the region.



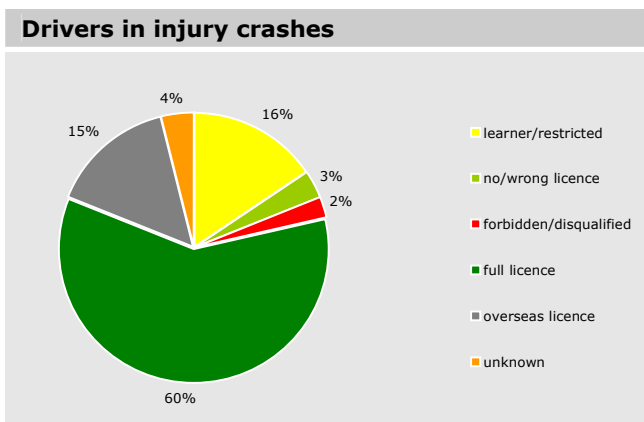
Poor handling, excessive speed and alcohol were the driver factors most commonly recorded in both injury and non-injury crashes. Close to one third of crashes were in darkness and just under one third were on wet or icy roads. The fixed objects struck most often in crashes on rural local roads in the region were ditches, trees, fences, upright banks and poles.

Drivers involved in injury crashes on urban local roads in the region were most commonly in the 15–19 year and 20–24 year age groups. Female drivers represented 30 percent of all drivers reported in injury crashes on urban local roads in the region.

Driver behaviour

In injury crashes on roads in the West Coast Region males make up two thirds of drivers involved in injury crashes. In urban areas, male drivers were at fault in 67 percent of single vehicle crashes and 58 percent of multi-vehicle crashes. In rural areas, males were at fault in 63 percent of single vehicle crashes and 77 percent of multi-vehicle crashes.

Drivers involved in injury crashes on roads in the region were most commonly in the 15–19 year and the 20–24 year age groups. Other age groups were also represented.



Overseas drivers represented 15 percent of drivers involved in injury crashes on roads in the West Coast Region. Drivers with a restricted or learner licence accounted for 16 percent of drivers.

General

Speed

Travelling at a speed too fast for the conditions was reported in 28 percent of all injury crashes reported in the region in the last five years. Sixteen people died and 208 were injured in these crashes. There were also 160 non-injury speed-related crashes reported. Speed as a factor in crashes has reduced in the region.

Almost 90 percent of speed-related crashes were loss of control or head-on crashes on bends, mostly in rural areas. Almost 40 percent of these crashes were on local roads.

Poor handling and alcohol were the driver factors most often associated with speed.

Almost half of all speed-related crashes were on wet or icy roads, 40 percent were in darkness and almost half were at weekends.

Almost half of all drivers involved in injury speed-related crashes were males aged less than 25 years.

Alcohol

Alcohol was involved in 14 percent of injury crashes in the region. In the last five years nine people died and 93 were injured in alcohol-related crashes. There were also 78 non-injury alcohol-related crashes reported. The number of injury and non-injury crashes in the region involving alcohol has been reducing.

In both urban and rural areas most alcohol-related crashes involved loss of control, mainly on bends. Driving too fast and poor handling were the driver factors most often associated with alcohol.

Almost two thirds of alcohol-related crashes were in rural areas of the region. Most were in darkness and 60 percent were at weekends.

Three quarters of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in injury crashes were males, mostly aged less than 25 years.

Failure to give way

Failure to give way or stop was recorded in 70 (14 percent) of all reported injury crashes for the last five years. These crashes resulted in six fatalities and 103 injuries. There were also 147 non-injury crashes reported where this factor was recorded. Sixty percent of injury crashes and 77 percent of non-injury crashes were in urban areas of the region.

Poor observation was the driver factor most often associated with failure to give way crashes. Most failure to give way crashes occurred in daylight during the week. For injury crashes only, both males and females of all ages were involved in crashes where failure to give way or stop was recorded.

Restraints

At the indicator sites used by Land Transport NZ surveys of restraint wearing indicate that use of safety belts by drivers in the West Coast Region ranges from 85 to 95 percent. In all areas the wearing rate for 2005 was slightly less than in 2004. For passengers the rate varied from just below 90 percent to over 95 percent.

Performance measures

The table below lists some of the local government regional performances measures noted in the March 2006 issues of *Road safety progress*, a publication prepared by Research and Statistics, Ministry of Transport. It compares the measures for the West Coast Region with the range of performances recorded for all regions.

	Performance range for all regions	West Coast Region 2005 injury crashes
Open road speed crashes % of rural crashes where excessive speed was a factor	18%–29%	24%
Open road alcohol crashes % of rural crashes where alcohol was a factor	9%–22%	12%
Urban alcohol crashes % of urban crashes where alcohol was a factor	8%–20%	10%
Reporting rate estimated % of all serious injury crashes that are reported	55%–83%	70%
Safety belts % of safety belts not worn	3%–9%	6%
Cycle helmets % of cycle helmets not worn	5%–24%	18%

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